

Common Core - What's all the hubbub, bub?

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What it is

- The concept that standards should be nationwide, not just statewide
- All students should be able to pass the same standardized tests

What it is

- This is NOT CURRICULUM. It is a set of desired outcomes.
- Curriculum is what you do - how you teach. These are a list of standards.

Why common core?

- Proponents say it serves three main purposes:
 - 1) Serves transient student populations
 - 2) Creates consistency in student preparation
 - 3) Standards rigorous enough to compete in global market

However...

- HOWEVER... some of the standards include methods (in particular, in Math) that students should master. Example:
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZEGijN_8R0
- Go to handouts labeled “Examples of C.C. student problems”

Why Common Core?

- Research and evidence based
- Clear, understandable, & consistent
- Aligned with college & career expectations
- Focus on higher-order thinking skills
- Built upon the strengths of current state standards
- Informed by other top-performing countries to prepare students in a global economy

Why common core?

- Test results showing the U.S. dramatically behind other countries
- See the video (3 minutes)
- <http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/>

Who has signed on for common core?

- Go to the map:
- <http://www.academicbenchmarks.com/common-core-state-adoption-map/>

What about Minnesota?

- “Partial Adoption”
- English-Language Arts implemented 2012-2013
- ELA set to have a standard review 2018-2019

What about Minnesota?

- MN did not adopt common core math standards that were developed 2008
- Felt they were less rigorous than what we currently have
 - Researchers say up to 2 years behind us

What about testing?

- Currently there are states creating the shared assessments that are part of common core.
 - Set for 2015 release
- Until their completion, states are using their own
- Go to the map:
- <http://www.academicbenchmarks.com/common-core-assessment-consortia/>

What about other areas?

- Science: Next Generation Science Standards released April 2013
- Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Earth and Space Sciences, Engineering, Technology and Applications of Science.
- Go to the map:
- <http://www.academicbenchmarks.com/next-generation-science-standards-adoption-map/>

Phew! I don't teach ELA nor science, I can go home

- Not so fast!
- Within the ELA standards are specific techniques for integrating reading and writing into your classroom as well.
- Review packet "English Language Arts Standards"

How were the C.C. standards derived?

- Compared U.S. to other successful countries
- Developed HS standards & then worked backwards to develop elementary standards

Financial reasons to comply?

- Must adopt rigorous standards to get NCLB waiver
- Must adopt to be eligible for Race to the Top \$

Criticisms?

- Represents government over reach
- Shared tests will not accommodate for special needs or cultural variations
- Assessments will be online
 - so technology needs must be addressed

Criticisms?

- Elementary Standards are based on high school outcomes and do not address needs of young learners
- Do not address what they are developmentally capable of

Criticisms?

- System being promoted by organizations w/an “agenda”
 - ie Pearson (test manufacturing company)
- Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Georgia, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Alabama, South Carolina and Utah are all considering rescinding C.C.

Criticisms?

- Concerns about student privacy
- Over 400 data points are collected on students from the tests (but this is indirect)
- Go to the list:
- <http://nces.ed.gov/forum/datamodel/eiebrowser/techview.aspx?instance=studentElementarySecondary>

Criticisms?

- With all this emphasis on the “core” areas, what happens to music, PE, etc.?
- Some schools have started adding multiple core classes a day to prep for testing

Weigh the “Misconceptions vs. Realities”

- See handout “Misconceptions vs. Realities” for supporters of C.C.’s arguments against the fears of Common Core

How will we know C.C. is working?

- Data in about 10 years

At the end of the day...

- Common Core is law in Minnesota - this affects every area except math, which has its own standards
- We need to familiarize ourselves with the standards and how they affect our classrooms
- Standards are all available online at:
www.corestandards.org